

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT'S PERSPECTIVES IN EUROPE

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Abstract:

Increasing regions' importance in Europe represents a striking phenomenon in the last years. Regional development is an evolving process that aims at reducing socio-economic disparities at the level of a certain territory, while boosting its potential.

One of the European Union objectives is to sustain balanced and sustainable economic and social progress, strengthening economic and social cohesion of member countries. An important role in this process is played by the regions, which are considered closer to the citizens.

In European states, the forms of regionalization correspond to different administrative and political realities existing in those countries. Models applied varies by the powers given to regional authorities, involved institutions, the degree of decentralization, being several types of regionalization.

Keywords: regional development, European Union, citizens.

The action of regionalisation in Europe is the result of a number of phenomena and activities which lead to the formation of the regionalisation of forms, European States being in correspondence with the political and administrative realities existing in those countries (Popa, 2014).

Council of Europe designates the region as "a medium size range which is likely to be determined geographic and which is considered to be homogeneous" (Alexandru, 2008).

If it is assumed that the term "midsize" is totally subjective, you can't assign a region type. Instead, traffic between the territory and the human element that populates the element that appears as a homogeneous character of the region, is always present when it comes to defining it (Alexandru, Bădescu, 1997).

On the other hand, the European Union defines rather the region administratively as "immediately below that Echelon of the State".

According to the nomenclature of Territorial Statistical Units (NUTS) that identifies the territorial administrative units depending on the size of the territory there are: the level of departmental/regional level and regional level.

Assembly of European Regions (ARE) defined regions as "lower-level political entities of the State, which have certain powers exercised by a Government, which in turn is accountable to a democratically elected Assembly".

Fulfilling these aspects in the process of establishing a new European Union can signal the three decisive directions that define regional reality ascendancy:

- firstly, the regions contributes to economic development and to the achievement of the objective of economic and social cohesion;
- secondly, the regions contributing to the citizens of the European Union's reality, making possible a greater institutional democratization;
- Thirdly, the regions are exponents of a Europe in which pluralistic realities cohabit cultural, linguistic and social variety.

In an attempt to define the terms of regionalization and regionalism from the perspective of the European Union has appealed to the phenomena that have marked these terms over time.

Looking for a regional realities it lists four such phenomena:

- regional imbalances are one of the problems whose existence does not require lengthy demonstrations, almost all European States have differences in the territory;

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- ethno-cultural alienations have been recognised at the regional level by the community which it considers unjustified linguistic and cultural dependencies in relation to other regions. At the same time they do not agree with the affirmation of their inability to manage their own problems;

- centralism, having a close connection with the previous phenomenon is characterized by the process by which any decision, regardless of the scope of the directive, shall be taken at the level of the State;

- "socialization" of European policy (Tourraine, 1965) has a direct impact on regional phenomenon, representing the State's increasing importance in all sectors of social life and even individual.

These regional phenomena are the causes of regional dynamics that are felt in Europe, regional dynamics which have three phases in their development:

- our regional consciousness;

- regional or regionalist movements actions;

- development of institutions or regional powers (Alexandru, Bădescu, 1997).

Regionalism is a movement that comes from the bottom up in relation to the three phases of the regional process. Regionalism is the awareness of common interests (the region being perceived as a territory considered homogeneous by the people you live) and, at the same time, their aspiration to participate in the management of such interests. Regional consciousness is very close, on a wider scale, of the consciousness of "local affairs" which exists at the local level. From here you have a notion of the community naturally aspire to manage businesses because it considers to be most suitable to know them, understand them, and steer them to defend the interests of the region. In particular, this regional community is considered better able to solve these things in comparison with the State, considered as too distant and too big, accused of wants to impose a particularism model unit and in any case by not having a suitable size to resolve in an effective manner their problems.

Regionalism corresponds to a deep desire of communities to be responsible for solving the problems which concern them directly (Trăilescu, 2005).

Regionalisation, as opposed to regionalism, has a downward trajectory, has other goals and proposes other means of implementing the goals than those used in the case of regionalism. This is the fundamental difference that recurs in each phase of the "regional process".

In response to the regionalism movement, the State can thus recognize a regional identity (the region being seen this time as a territory considered homogeneous by the State) and may take the measures necessary to ensure that the regions to participate in the management of their own affairs.

In fact, the starting point of regionalisation is the regional imbalances or rather their awareness. This awareness is followed by a strategy of an appliance or state that starting suprastatal at different techniques, try to plan to decentralize, to deconcentrate at the regional level economic activities grouped in some ways too-from national or european space, can speak in this context even "portions of the plan."

The last stage of "regional process", the regional institution, is marked by obtaining decision-making power which only confirm, and in the case of regionalization, any such movement from top to bottom.

There are the inevitable interaction between the two movements: regionalism-come down and the regionalization of the top newcomer. Through a dynamic process, the needs of the regions are responding through a State policy which has repercussions on regional sentiment and give rise to reactions in the region.

Therefore, regionalism is a political speech whose purpose can lead to Federation-and the regionalisation of the administrative action, aimed at creating greater spaces for cooperation, and, last but not least, the establishment of new administrative-territorial units.

These are two different processes, the proof being that at the level of the Council of Europe was required to establish separate working groups for each.

In conclusion, it can be said that regionalisation has, as a rule, the importance of care they get, for a country or for Europe, a better balance in the distribution of riches by trying to raise the level of less developed areas. In turn, the regionalism golden rule enabling the region to the power of decision in all its components, affirmation under aspects of memory-identity and identity-action (Alexandru, Bădescu, 1997).

Regional decentralization takes into account existing regional differences in a country, as a result of factors of the various economic, demographic, traditions, historians, religious, ethnic, etc. This allows interested people to express freely their personality and to solve the most important problems are its own (Dvoracek, 1993).

Western contemporary doctrine (Wegener, Arbeit, 2006) identifies some common trends in European States regionalisation the regionalisation is starting to take shape and the traditional centralized States of Europe, on the basis of enhanced arrangements to promote and manage their own economic policy at regional level, politics tolerated and supported by the European Union, the trend that is likely to shorten the bottom-up traditional power of national and State to dissolve the traditional mindset confined to State boundaries. However it is still largely an illusory to imagine a Europe without borders State whereas State identities are very powerful yet manifests and decision-making institution of the European Union, the Council is composed of representatives of Member States.

A study of the European Parliament regarding the European Union administrative divisions identify four models of regionalization. This diversity of designs pose a challenge regarding the establishment of common development throughout the European Union (<http://cursdegovernare.ro/regionalizarea-romaniei-modelele-europene-de-regionalizare-cum-s-a-reorganizat-polonia.html>).

1. Napoleonic Tradition. It is present in France, Italy, Spain, Greece, Central and Eastern Europe. this model is based on the centralization of authority, uniformity and symmetry.

2. German Tradition. It is present in Germany, Austria, Netherlands. This model supports-with a powerful State-intermediate entity of authority.

3. the Anglo-Saxon Tradition. Is present, especially in the United Kingdom. This model does not support the notion of the State as a legal entity.

4. the Scandinavian Tradition. Sweden and Finland applies the Scandinavian model. It has taken over from the French model the principle of uniformity, but applied in a somewhat more decentralized framework.

What's more, on the european plan is accepted definition of regionalization as the process by which it operates the construction of an autonomous action capacities having as object the promotion of the territory, infra-national, supra-local, but by mobilising its resources based on economic cooperation and local and regional solidarity, resulting in a faster development of its potential.

This process can be started based on existing administrative-territorial units, through the realization of a new territorial divisions. Is always conditioning constraints exercised by the political and administrative framework, and its evolution can be influenced by other factors. Creating regions with new administrative-territorial division must constitute only a particular way to this process, applied only in exceptional cases.

After an analysis, one can distinguish 5 types currently of regionalization, each of them presenting the homogeneous and consistent features (Gérard, 1999).

The administrative regionalization represents the type of regionalization resulting in the creation of the State, in direct subordination of government authorities or bodies, sometimes equipped with a certain autonomy, which is the legal instruments of the Executive and are placed under its control. Results units have a range of responsibilities on

the line to promote regional economic development, in which aim to mobilize the local collectivities and economic bodies.

In the EU, administrative regionalization characterizes currently Portugal, Greece, Sweden and the United Kingdom, and from among the candidate countries in this group are also included Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Slovakia and Slovenia.

In the case of regionalization through the existing local collectivities its development functions are taken directly from these collectivities, who wants to be an extension of their own responsibilities and the scope of their competencies or cooperation in a broader framework. It differs from the first in that regionalization is operated by means of decentralized institutions of the local authorities. Typical examples are Germany, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Romania and Hungary.

In Hungary, the law on spatial planning in 1996 granted the counties (states) is responsible for regional development. Are created with development councils, chaired by the President of the County Council. Regional development can give birth to a voluntary cooperation between counties, establishing a Council of regional development. In Romania, the notion of the region appeared in the administrative organization of the law on regional development in July 1998. This law provided for the creation of regions through agreement between the county councils located in the territory of the region concerned. In the present institutional framework, objectives, skills and tools of regional development policy in Romania are regulated by law No. 315 of 28 June 2004 concerning regional development in Romania (Published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, no. 577 of 29 June 2004).

Regional decentralization defines the creation or substitution of a new territorial collectivities at higher level than the existing ones and which is assigned the name of the region. The region thus defined is characterized by the fact that it applies the general functioning of the administrative-territorial units. She formed a new administrative-territorial category, of the same legal nature as well as existing ones, but is distinguished by the fact that includes in its structure on the latter, having a much larger territorial revolve, as well as its competences, primarily through its essential economic vocation, directed at development. Although the administrative organization of the territory change, this kind of respect the constitutional order of the regionalisation of the unitary national.

The only Western European country that has put into practice the concept of regionalization is France. Among the examples of other countries are Poland and the Czech Republic. These two countries have entered the regions as territorial-administrative units in their Constitutions. In Poland were created in 1998, a total of 16 voivodeships, instead of 49 existing since 1975, incorporating in their structure, a total of 308 arrondissements. In the Czech Republic were established on the basis of a law of 1997 on the establishment of constitutional "territorial-administrative units of higher level", a total of 13 regions, plus the capital Prague, placed at the same level.

Regionalization policy affects the structure of the State and affect the Constitution. From the point of view of terminology, in French the term "regional autonomy" would best reflect the character of the desired outputs for exactly this type of regionalism, meaning autonomy itself. In other languages, in order to remove any possible ambiguity that can accompany the notion of "autonomy", preferring to use the term "regionalisation of politics".

Legal, regionalization policy is, in relation to regional decentralization, legislative power by attributing a regional assembly, which has extensive competences whose content is defined and guaranteed by the Constitution or by a text of constitutional nature.

Regionalization policy dominating the territorial organization structures of the State in Spain, Italy and Belgium — although this country has a formal Federal Constitution since 1993. It is also a typical example of the regulators in the position of Prime Minister of the Federal State of Bavaria, which supports the idea of a public "Bavarian" Nations,

which must defend "identity" in Europe, from the Bavarian State inside a "diverse and homogeneous". This type is not used in any of the candidate countries.

Regionalization through federal authority refers to a federal state that generally does not oppose the nation State. On the contrary, in some cases it was a way of national integration (cases of USA, Switzerland, Germany). In these countries, the modern State construction was done through federalism. A federal State may be affected but through regionalization or regionalism as any other State not be applied in any country in Central and Eastern Europe.

After examination of the distribution of regional institutions, it appears clear that the type of regionalisation presents a different profile in the States of Western Europe compared with that of the Nations of Central and Eastern Europe.

At first, the type of regionalization is the most widespread by local colectivities, met in 7 countries of 15. In the European Union, federalism, and institutional regionalism characterizes fully not only 5 countries: Austria, Belgium, Germany, Spain and Italy. In the other two countries apply the regionalization policy for part of their territory: Portugal (to the Islands) and the United Kingdom (for Scotland). Regional decentralization, typical for France, partly in the United Kingdom (Wales) and in Sweden (Scania); administrative regionalization of Greece, continental Portugal characterizes, United Kingdom (England) and Sweden (most of the counties).

It is certain that the regions and local colectivities in general participate increasingly more to the process of European integration. Himself with the Community policies have contributed, as increasing the structural funds and the cohesion funds, to produce a territorial Governments to mobilization towards accessing funding and programming have encouraged potential beneficiaries, whether public or private, to present requests based on regional factors.

Apart from this fact, the speeches about regenalizaciones and regions in Europe wears a very wide palette. Sometimes, regionalization is identified with regional autonomy in the form of supporting federalist, with the regionalization policy or, if minimal, with regional decentralization. In all these cases, proponents of regionalizations assigns the four merits:

- promote economic development;
- decentralisation;
- bringing democracy closer to citizens;
- respect for regional and local identity.

At a closer look to these different aspects, appears clearly that regionalization assessment requires a more addressed approach.

Economically, it is established that there is no connection between development and institutional type of regionalization and the reduction of regional disparities and the regionalisation applied type. On the other hand, it is clear that development cannot take place without the existence of an environment and a favourable local climate, which is substantiated by the experience "industrial districts".

With regard to decentralization, regionalization can have very different implications. Thus, it can represent the central power in relation to a form of decentralization, but it can also produce a centralism at the regional level in relation to the local colectivities, thus creating conditions for the development of the phenomenon of positive discrimination of local minorities against the majority population nationwide. This situation is found in particular in the case of political and regionalization of the Federal States.

In terms of democracy, it would be necessary for regional institutions to obtain representation through elections for compliance with this principle. In other words, regionalization is the one who needs democracy to gain legitimacy and the development of democracy is the need for regionalisation.

In terms of regional and local identities, even if it is deemed a regionalisation could meet in a certain extent, be made more corrective. Examples of different countries shows that cultural and linguistic particularities can be complied with without having to resort to territorialism.

Politics can distinguish two justifications. On the one hand, the territorial colections are the main benefits of the structural funds, and on the other hand, the territorial components resulting from its regionalisation policy and federal States-for example, the German Länder-find a way to be able to interfere directly in European policies, transcending and constitutional competences.

Thus regionalization is a long-term process, whereby the State introduces a second level of governance in a country's territorial organisation, new institutions can, however, vary in terms of responsibilities and authorities created, which are almost always local institutions suprainpuse. The term regionalization has become broader and involves a process that creates a subnațională capacity, but more important than the local shares of development of a geographical area and economic and socio-cultural specific. This process can be based on existing political and administrative system or may give rise to new territorial organization that could better support for socio-economic growth and balanced development.

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